

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCCT-01 SY-05 A-01 OPR-02 OC-05

CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 SCS-03 SCA-01 OMB-01 PC-01 USSS-00

SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 CU-02 /112 W

----- 084353

O P 271245Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5008

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

USINT BAGHDAD UNN

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMCONSUL STUTTGART PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 8205

STUTTGART FOR ELG

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, LE, PLO

SUBJECT: MARTIAL LAW CONSIDERED; SECURITY SITUATION WORSENS AND
POLITICOS PESSEMISTIC

REF: BEIRUT 8149

1. AURA OF GLOOM HANGS OVER LEBANESE CAPITAL JUNE 27 AS
AREAS OF TENSION SPREAD THROUGHOUT CITY AND POLITICAL
PROCESSES APPEAR DEADLOCKED WITH NO CABINET IN
SIGHT. RESPONSIBLE LEBANESE ARMY OFFICER ESTIMATED
EARLY IN MORNING THAT THERE 70 RPT 70 PERCENT CHANCE
THAT STATE OF EMERGENCY WOULD BE PROCLAIMED DURING DAY
AND ODDS MAY HAVE IMPROVED DURING MORNING. GENERAL
PUBLIC, EITHER TAKING THEIR CUE FROM LOCAL PRESS REPORTS
OR FALLING HEIR TO RUMOR, SPECULATING ON POSSIBILITY OF CUR-
FEW, WITH SOME UNOFFICIAL SOURCES CLAIMING IT WILL TAKE EF-
FECT IN EARLY AFTERNOON. DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY
CERTAINLY INVOLVE CURFEW AND PROBABLY WOULD SIGNAL INTERVEN-
TION OF LEBANESE ARMY, WHICH HAS TO DATE REMAINED OUTSIDE
FIGHTING.

2. AS HAS BECOME PATTERN DURING RECURRING CRISES, CLASHES
(INCLUDING SUBSTANTIAL HEAVY WEAPONS FIRE) PICKED UP SUB-
STANTIALLY DURING NIGHT OF JUNE 26/27 AS HAS TAPERED OFF SOME-
WHAT SINCE DAYLIGHT THIS MORNING. ACTUAL FIGHTING REMAINS
CONFINED TO AIN RUMANNEH/SHIA AREA AND ENVIRONS, BUT
SERIES OF BOMBINGS (REMINISCENT OF NIGHTRIDER TACTICS OF
APRIL CRISIS) TOOK PLACE OVERNIGHT, INCLUDING EXPLOSION AT
CHRISTIAN-OWNED CONCORDE BUILDING, NEAR BRISTOL HOTEL.
WHILE CLASHES STILL LOCALIZED FOR MOMENT, TENSION AREAS HAVE
SPREAD LIKE INKBLOT, WITH VARIOUS COMMUNITIES RE-ERECTING
AND MANNING BARRICADES AND REPORTS OF SNIPERS BACK IN BUSI-
NESS. AT LAST REPORT, ROAD SOUTH TO SIDON WAS ONLY REMAIN-
ING OUTLET TO HINTERLAND OPEN TO TRAFFIC. AIRPORT ROAD WAS
CLOSED FOR UNDERTERMINED PERIOD LAST NIGHT BUT REOPENED
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EARLY JUNE 27 AND PRESENTLY CLEAR FOR USE. AIRPORT IS
OPERATING NORMALLY AT THIS TIME.

3. JOINT LIAISON CENTER (RUMOR CONTROL, ETC.), WHICH HAS
BEEN FUNCTIONING WELL, ATTEMPTING KEEP RESIDENTS ADVISED
OF SITUATION AROUND TOWN (SEE, FOR EXAMPLE FBIS JN270549Y).
ALL THREE TELEPHONE LINES TO CENTER NOW PERMANENTLY OCCUP-
IED, HOWEVER, PROVIDING SOME INDICATION OF LEVEL OF ANXIETY

PREVAILING. SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF EMBASSY FSL STAFF UNABLE TO TRAVEL TO WORK THIS MORNING AND REGIONAL SERVICE CENTER WAS CLOSED BECAUSE OF LOW ATTENDANCE AND EXPOSED POSITION.

4. LEBANESE ARMY, IN REPORTING INTENSIFICATION OF CLASHES, STATED EARLY JUNE 27 THAT AT LEAST 45 RPT 45 PERSONS WERE KILLED IN PREVIOUS TWENTY-FOUR HOURS (QUANTUM JUMP OVER PREVIOUS CASUALTY FIGURES). ARMY FIGURE, HOWEVER, INCLUDES ONLY BODIES ON HAND AND TOTAL LOSSES PROBABLY SOMEWHAT HIGHER.

5. IT DIFFICULT JUNE 27 TO FIND OPTIMIST RE POLITICAL EFFORTS TO FORM NEW CABINET. PREMIER-DESIGNATE RASHID KARAME CONTINUES GO THROUGH MOTIONS OF CONSULTATION BUT CONSENSUS IS GROWING THAT PROCESS HOPELESSLY DEADKLOCKED. KARAME SCHEDULED LEAVE BEIRUT SUNDAY, JUNE 29 TO ATTEND FUNCTION IN HIS HOME TOWN, TRIPOLI, AND THERE MANY WHO BELIEVE HE WILL NOT RPT NOT RETURN TO BEIRUT, EFFECTIVELY ABANDONING HIS EFFORTS FOR THE MOMENT. SUCH A MOVE COULD PROVE DISASTROUS IN PRESENT HIGHLY-CHARGED POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE AND SOME OBSERVERS ALREADY TALKING OF FEARS OF CIVIL WAR. REPORTEDLY THERE CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE ON KARAME NOT TO GIVE UP IF, IN FACT, SUCH IS HIS INTENTION. OTHER COMMENTATORS BELIEVE SYRIAN DEPUTY-PREMIER KHADDAM IS IN WINGS PREPARING ANOTHER TRY AT SAVING SITUATION. WE UNDERSTAND SYRIANS ARE, IN FACT, IN CONTACT WITH VARIOUS LEBANESE POLITICAL FACTIONS TO DETERMINE PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME IF KHADDAM RE-TURNS. APPEARS HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO USE, HOWEVER, THAT SYRIANS WOULD ENGAGE THEIR PRESTIGE UNLESS THEY FEEL THEIR EFFORTS COULD SALVAGE SITUATION.

6. AMONG OVERNIGHT INCIDENTS OF INTEREST WAS APPARENT CLOSE SCRAPE BY 'ARAFAT. TWO EXPLOSIONS OCCURRED NEAR CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMAND POST (ALLEGEDLY IN TARIQ JDIIDE NEAR ARAB UNIVERSITY) WHERE HE WAS MEETING PALESTINIAN COLLEAGUES. CONFLICTING REPORTS ATTRIBUTE BLASTS TO DYNAMITE BOMBS (WHICH WOULD PROBABLY INDICATE "REJECTIONISTS") OR ROCKETS (WHICH COULD BE ANYBODY).

7. TO BEST OUR KNOWLEDGE, ALL AMCITS SAFE. WE HAVE INSTRUCTED EMBASSY STAFF TO REMAIN IN HOMES, EXCEPT FOR NECESSARY TRAVEL, AND ARE PASSING SAME WORD TO AMERICAN COMMUNITY.
GODLEY

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONAL SECURITY, MARTIAL LAW, PROGRESS REPORTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BEIRUT08205
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750223-0459
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975067/aaaaaftc.tel
Line Count: 165
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BEIRUT 8149
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <22 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MARTIAL LAW CONSIDERED; SECURITY SITUATION WORSENS AND POLITICOS PESSEMISTIC
TAGS: PINS, PGOV, LE, PLO
To: STATE DIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006